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tions may fall away from us like so much scaffolding. Our very patriotism may merge into a world passion. But, whatever its form, we cannot permit ourselves to doubt the outcome. We must face the contest like Virgil's oarsmen: *Posunt quia posse videntur*. Arnold's was no such defiant and heroic mood; in consequence, his poetry—half protest, half exhortation—is destined to occupy a precarious place in the history of the century's thought.

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DISCUSSIONS.

"RATIONAL HEDONISM."

MISS JONES's article in the October number of the *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ETHICS* seems to me one of the best defences of Utilitarianism that I have yet seen. I have no intention at present of attempting a complete reply to it; but as several of her remarks are directed against statements of mine, a few explanations seem to be called for. It will be best to take up the points in order. I hope that the inevitable curtness and dogmatism of my remarks will not be supposed to imply any want of respect for Miss Jones's criticisms, which I have certainly found both interesting and suggestive. I think she has advocated a bad case about as well as it could be advocated.

Miss Jones begins* with an attempt to meet the objection raised by me (among others) to the term pleasure on the ground of its ambiguity. She meets this by giving a careful definition of pleasure and pain. But, unfortunately, this definition seems to me to be itself highly ambiguous. "Pleasure," she says, "is *feeling which is judged in itself desirable*." What does "feeling" mean? Is it used in Mr. Bradley's sense or in Dr. Ward's? If in the former, why should only feelings judged to be desirable be called pleasure, and not also thoughts? If in the latter, there is surely a *petitio principii*, since it is a disputed point whether feeling in that sense is ever judged to be desirable at all. And there are other senses

in which the term "feeling" may be used. Again, why should it be said that feeling is *judged*? Do the lower animals judge? And, if not, are we to hold, with the Cartesians, that they have no sense of pleasure and pain? Again, if a Stoic judges pleasure to be indifferent, or an ascetic judges it to be undesirable,* are we to say that they do not feel pleasure? Miss Jones says that the appeal is to be made "to the consciousness of the sentient (and rational) individual at the time of feeling." What does "and rational" mean? Does it mean that mere animals are to be excluded? And what are we to do if (as in the case of the ascetic) sense and reason seem to be opposed? Finally, what are we to understand by "desirable"? Cannot a man simply enjoy pleasure without going on to desire it, or to think of it as being desirable? It was such difficulties as these that led me to prefer "sense of value." I used the term "sense," so as to avoid "judgment;" and I used the term "value," so as to avoid "desirable;" and I avoided the term "feeling" altogether. But I admit that some difficulties are still left.

The next objection to which Miss Jones refers † is that with reference to the *abstractness* of the term "pleasure." In connection with this she draws the distinction between *pleasure* and *causes of pleasure*; and apparently she identifies causes of pleasure with *objects* of pleasure. Is an object of pleasure properly to be described as its cause? The two elements, pleasure and its object, seem to me rather to be simply two aspects in a single state of consciousness. Of course, there are objects antecedent to the pleasant object, which may be described as its causes; but the pleasant object of consciousness itself and the pleasantness of it do not seem to be distinguishable as antecedent and consequent. The object is not *pleasure-producing*, but simply *pleasant*. Then Miss Jones goes on to say, with reference to such objects, "surely it is this quality in them [the pleasant or pleasure-producing quality] which we are thinking of, and which recommends them to us." Certainly a pleasant object is pleasant, and the pleasantness of it consists in its being pleasant. But is this pleasantness an *effect* produced by a pleasant object? Is it something which

* In Miss Jones's sense. Does not "undesirable" properly mean simply *not desirable*? Miss Jones uses it to mean the contrary of desirable,—*desirable not*.

† Page 83.

persists when the pleasant object is removed? I confess that, to my mind, pleasantness by itself seems too like the smile on the vanished Cheshire cat. The only pleasantness that I can understand is the pleasantness of some pleasant object (by which, of course, I mean some object of consciousness, presented or represented). Pleasantness in itself seems to me a pure abstraction. When, to use Miss Jones's illustration, "a child is vaguely promised a *treat*," I do not conceive that the child expects to be presented with a quantity of pleasantness. It expects some pleasant object, and probably has even a pretty definite idea of the kind of object (or, at any rate, of several alternative kinds of objects) which it may fairly expect.* "May we not," says Miss Jones, "similarly desire to obtain,—*e.g.*, truth,—though it is an abstraction, and we may not know at all in what particular statements it may turn out to be embodied?" I think not. To say that any one seeks truth is an abbreviation. What he wants is to know the truth about some object or class of objects; or, it may be, to know the general conditions of the apprehension of truth, or, perhaps, the ultimate nature of metaphysical reality. No seeker for truth would be satisfied by being presented with a number of statements which happen to have in common the quality of being true,—*e.g.*, Peter struck William on Thursday morning, and the like. When it is said that we seek truth or pleasure or beauty, or any other abstraction, what is meant is merely that we seek true statements with reference to some particular class of objects, pleasant experiences of certain kinds, or certain varieties of beautiful things. Within certain limits there are no doubt many different objects that might satisfy these desires; but still what is sought in each case is certain more or less clearly defined concrete objects. In no case is it a mere residual *effect* of these objects,—an abstract quality of truth,

* Perhaps I may venture also to express a doubt whether the average child would value the promise of "a treat" quite so much as Miss Jones appears to suggest. I remember to have heard of a child which, when invited to pay a visit some day, remarked, "Some day is a day I do not like." I suspect that children do not value the vague and the abstract any more than grown people do. If they ever care for general ideas, it is not for the abstract general ideas of the older logicians, but rather for such general ideas as those that are dealt with by Lotze. They have little regard for truth, beauty, and pleasure as abstractions; but they like fairy-tales (which they take to be true), pictures (which they fancy to be beautiful), and sweetmeats (which they know to be pleasant).

pleasantness, or beauty, which the objects bring with them and leave behind.

In her next point * Miss Jones seems to be replying to other writers, and I do not know that I have much concern with what she says. It is certainly no part of my view that pleasure is not a distinguishable element in our experience, in a similar sense to that in which truth and beauty are distinguishable elements. What I deny is that it is a separable element. I believe it to be simply an aspect in a concrete whole. I do not see how it can be regarded as a separable unit, capable of being summed up along with other units of the same kind, any more than I see this in the case of truth or beauty. If it were said, for instance, that Carlyle's "Frederick the Great" contains thirty-four units of truth and Thomson and Tait's "Natural Philosophy" forty-seven, or if it were said that in the Dresden Galleries there are fifty-three units of beauty and only 26.7 in the London ones, I should not feel sure in either case that I had correctly apprehended the meaning of the statement. So with the measurement of pleasure. Truth, beauty, pleasure, and the like, all mean something; but they do not mean anything that can be separated from the objects to which they belong and regarded as a sum of units.† Miss Jones adds that "activity," "self-realization," etc., are as abstract as pleasure. I think not; but even if they were, it must be remembered that those who take these as ends do not, as a rule,‡ regard them as units to be summed.

The next point § is concerned with the view that pleasure is sense of value. Miss Jones urges that, if this is so, the value must be measured by the pleasure. This is a strange doctrine. We

* Page 83.

† I may note here that I am doubtful whether Miss Jones has correctly represented Carlyle's meaning at this point. I am not aware that Carlyle ever stated that the highest good is blessedness. What he said was that we could do without happiness and content ourselves with blessedness. And I suppose he meant by blessedness nothing more than the consciousness of doing right. Is it certain that this is always a pleasant consciousness?

‡ Simmel is an exception. He thinks of a maximum sum of activity as one way of formulating the moral end, or at least as furnishing the basis for one form of the moral imperative. This kind of abstraction seems to me quite as unjustifiable as that of Hedonism. But, after all, Simmel himself regards it as only symbolical.

§ Page 85.

measure heat by means of thermometers, not by our sensations; and if value also has an objective significance, why should it not have an objective measure? In Economics values are generally measured in terms of money; and it seems to be now almost universally recognized that in the estimation of such values pleasure (in the purely psychological sense) has no place. In morals there is no similar measure of value. Moral values could be estimated only, I suppose, by observing the relations in which different objects are placed to one another in the choice of the best men. Pleasure is a sort of unreasoned choice;* and this is what I mean by calling it a sense of value. So far from its being the case that such value can only be measured by pleasure, I should be disposed to say rather that the only intelligible meaning that can be given to the measurement of pleasure is the measurement of preferability, —*i.e.*, the measurement of value as immediately apprehended without reason. The rest of Miss Jones's objections at this point seems to me to be entirely removed by means of the conception of "universes of desire," of which I have made frequent use in my treatment of the subject. She asks whether every desired object has value. Certainly, I should answer. Only we have to ask, further, value *for whom* or value *within what universe*? Pleasure is sense of value only for the consciousness that feels it and only at the moment at which it is felt. Value in the highest and most objective sense is, of course, value for the highest universe, value for reason. It is not value in this sense of which pleasure is a sense, unless the pleasure in question happens to be the bliss of satisfied reason. Drunkenness is certainly a good to the man who is for the moment "o'er a' the ills of life victorious." Whether it is a good on the whole, a good for the completely rational consciousness, is another question. Undeserved obloquy is certainly a good to the envious man. "Evil, be thou my good," says Satan; and why not? It is good enough *for him*. But it is not good objectively, good on the whole, good for reason. We have to distinguish between subjective and objective values; and it is only of the former that pleasure is a sense,—except when it is the pleasure of satisfied reason. When this distinction is carefully drawn, it seems to me that all Miss Jones's objections at this point vanish at once.

* That pleasure is an implicit judgment of value seems to be recognized in Miss Jones's own definition of it.

I am not sure that I understand Miss Jones's next objection.* She says that, as sensitive beings, we could not have any sense of value. If sense meant judgment, this would certainly be true ; but I have used the somewhat vague word "sense" to indicate a form of immediate apprehension. I suppose animals feel pleasure and pain ; and I think pleasure and pain in animals may fairly be described as an immediate sense of certain experiences as good or evil, choice-worthy or the reverse. At any rate, whatever we may think of mere animals, surely it can hardly be denied that, at different stages of human development, in which it diverges more or less from a merely sentient consciousness, different objects please and pain ; and that even at a single stage of consciousness a single object may please or pain us, according to the point of view from which we regard it, according to the universe in which we place it. But perhaps what Miss Jones wishes to urge at this point is that pleasure is not merely sense of value, but is actually that which is judged to be valuable. If so, it is no doubt as rational beings that we judge it to be valuable. But I see no sufficient reason for believing that pleasure as such is what we as rational beings judge to be valuable or desirable ; and to *define* pleasure in such a way as to imply this, seems to me to involve a *petitio principii*.

The next point,† as to whether *good* = *object of desire*, is essentially the same one, and is answered by reference to universes of desire. It should be remembered also that, when we speak of desire in this sense, we mean simply *choice*. It does not necessarily imply *anticipation*. There may be desire, in this sense, for that which is present. When we desire something that is future, our desire for it now and our desire for it at the time when it is attained are, of course, desires within different universes. What is good in anticipation is not necessarily good in attainment or in retrospect. By applying this conception throughout, Miss Jones's objections seem to me to vanish entirely.

The objection founded on the paradox of hedonism ‡ is, as I understand, an objection to *psychological* Hedonism, which we have all agreed to reject.

Miss Jones's question,§ whether any object can or ought to be regarded as good or valuable if it causes no happiness, does not seem to concern me ; since I have never denied that pleasantness is, in some sense, a characteristic of every desirable object.

* Page 87.

† Page 87.

‡ Page 88.

§ Page 88.

Her next point* seems to me to involve some want of clearness. A great number of questions are raised together, some of which do not seem specially to concern me; and the difficulty about the qualitative differences of pleasures (which seems to be the main point) does not appear to have been rightly understood. Roughly speaking, most Hedonists regard pleasures as being measurable in respect of two dimensions, their extent and their degree; but some hold that, in addition to these, there are differences of quality, of which it would be necessary to take account. Now there are difficulties in connection with all these. In connection with extent there is the difficulty of discreteness, to which we shall have to return. In connection with degree there is the difficulty of reducing an intensive to an extensive magnitude; and this appears to be the difficulty that Miss Jones has in her mind at the present point. The difficulty is the same as that which would be involved in measuring degrees of truth or beauty or heat (the subjective sensation†) or any similar quality. In all these cases we distinguish higher and lower degrees of the same quality, and the question is whether a higher degree can be said to be so many times a lower one. To this Miss Jones would apparently answer that to say that one thing is higher than another is to say that it possesses *more* of a certain quality. But this is a mere evasion. The question is, Can this kind of "more" be reduced to the other kind? Can intensive quantity be reduced to extensive? Can that which is more beautiful, for instance, be said to possess so many more units (and, if so, units of *what*?) than that which is less beautiful? Similarly, we have to ask whether the more pleasant has a definite number more units of something than the less pleasant; and, if so, we have to ask, further, whether that of which it has more units is itself pleasure,—*i.e.*, we have to ask whether intensive magnitude can be reduced to extensive; and, if so, whether the extensive magnitude to which it is reduced is still a magnitude of the same quality? Now I am not prepared to deny that this may be so; but surely it is mere dogmatism to affirm that it is so.

* Pages 88–90.

† I suppose it will not be disputed that in physical measurements of heat it is never degrees of heat as a subjective sensation that are being estimated. It seems at least extremely doubtful whether it is even conceivable that degrees of heat in this sense should ever be estimated as extensive magnitudes. At any rate, I wish that Miss Jones, or some other upholder of the Hedonistic Calculus, would explain how such intensive magnitudes are to be reduced to extensive.

But however this may be, this difficulty is only the difficulty about *intensity*, and does not touch that about *quality* at all. If pleasures differ, not merely in intensity, but also in quality, then the more or less which differentiates them is certainly not a more or less of pleasure,—unless, of course, the qualitative difference is in reality reducible to a difference of extensive or intensive quantity. The point is that in this case what we are measuring is *not pleasure at all*; and this point Miss Jones seems to have missed entirely.

When Miss Jones says* that there would be the same difficulty in measuring values as there is in measuring pleasures, she makes a statement which I have some difficulty in understanding. There could not be any theoretical difficulty in estimating subjective values, as they are constituted simply by individual choice. Nor could there be any ultimate theoretical difficulty in estimating objective values, as they are constituted by the choice of an entirely rational self. Of course, in both cases there is a serious *practical* difficulty; occasioned, in the one case, by the indefiniteness and capriciousness of individual choice, and, in the other case, by the fact that we have not realized the rational self. But even in the latter case an approximation is possible. The more we advance in insight the more possible does such a calculation become; whereas, in the case of pleasure (if my view is correct), the more we advance in insight the more does it become obvious that such a calculation is in its very nature absurd. I may add that I think it would not be difficult (though it would certainly be tedious) to show that in all cases in which Hedonistic writers seem to have reached any valuable result by the estimation of pleasures (*e.g.*, in Political Economy), it is value that they have really been estimating, not pleasure at all.†

Miss Jones remarks‡ that though a sum of pleasures is not pleasure,

* Page 88.

† Most of the economic writers who have dealt with the estimation of values (*e.g.*, Jevons, Walras, Menger, Wieser, Böhm-Bawerk, etc.) seem to me to err by not sufficiently distinguishing between subjective and objective values. And I am not sure that those writers, such as Edgeworth ("Mathematical Psychics"), and Ehrenfels ("Werththeorie und Ethik" in the *Vierteljahrsschrift für Wissenschaftliche Philosophie*, 1893-94), who have dealt with this subject from a point of view broader than the merely economic, have entirely avoided the same defect. Cf. my remarks on this point in the *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ETHICS*, vol. iii. pp. 297-299.

‡ Page 90.

yet it is pleasures. I think not. Take a series of pleasures, a_1, b_1, c_1, d_1 , and compare this with another series, a_2, b_2, c_2, d_2 . Then any member of either series is a pleasure, and any two or more of them are pleasures; but $a_1 + b_1 + c_1 + d_1$ is neither a pleasure nor pleasures, but merely an abstract idea. Suppose they were series of coins instead of pleasures. Let the first series be a series of pennies and the second of halfpennies. Then a_1 would be a penny; a_1, b_1, c_1, d_1 would be four pennies; $a_1 + b_1 + c_1 + d_1$ would be fourpence. Similarly, a_2 would be a halfpenny; a_2, b_2, c_2, d_2 would be four halfpennies; $a_2 + b_2 + c_2 + d_2$ would be twopence. How is the third step in each of these cases possible? It is possible because money is continuous as well as discrete. The four pennies might, if necessary, be melted down so as to form a single fourpenny piece. And, even apart from this possibility, it is conventionally agreed that four pennies shall be equivalent to fourpence,—*i.e.*, that the pennies need not always be used separately. They can be regarded as forming a single whole.* Now

* For the coin-collector, on the other hand, coins are simply discrete. Four old pennies are not for him fourpence. If the pennies are all alike, the extra three probably add nothing to the value of the one. They may even detract something from the dignity of its uniqueness. (Of course, I admit that pleasure, as conceived by the Hedonist, is not quite on a par with this,—since each pleasure is thought of as having a unique and independent value. But this does not affect the main point—the discreteness of pleasures.) At any rate, if four are preferred to one, it is for some extraneous reason,—*e.g.*, because if one is lost there are still some left; or because it diminishes the chance of rival collectors; or for some other reason. Similarly a number of men may acquire value for some extraneous reason.

“While three men hold together,
The kingdoms are less by three.”

Here a number of human beings, regarded as discrete, is valued as diminishing a totality regarded as continuous. But the extraneous reasons might also tell the other way. “Two’s company: three’s none.” In all such cases it is not the mere addition of discrete units that has significance. And in the same way the addition of pleasures may acquire significance. Just as the coin-collector may count his different coins with the view of seeing how nearly he approximates to the ideal of a complete set, so one may count his pleasurable experiences with the view of seeing to what extent he has appreciated the various sides of life. But it is the power of regarding life as a continuous whole that gives this calculation significance; and such a way of regarding life is wholly incompatible with the Hedonistic view of it. Even when Byron says,—

what warrant have we for regarding pleasures in this way? A sum of pleasures is merely the idea of a collection of discrete elements. They cannot be fused into a whole, so as to become a single pleasure; and if we regard them as our end, we are regarding something else than pleasure as forming our end. We are taking the idea of a sum as our end. Now there may be some adequate reason for this; but *primâ facie*, at any rate, it is incompatible with the view that pleasure is our end.* Miss Jones's remark about its not mattering whether one man suffers or a thousand, and so forth, seems to me rather irrelevant. The question is, Why does it matter? Is it because pleasures can be summed, or because life can be regarded as a totality, or for some other reason? The same applies to the remark about the separate pleasures of a single individual. In my treatment of the subject I have insisted that this is quite on a par with the separate pleasures of different individuals.†

When Miss Jones goes on to urge ‡ that it is difficult to imagine any chief good that would not be open to the same objection as the Hedonistic one,—viz., that it can only be realized by summing a series of successive moments,—she seems to show merely that she has become so accustomed to the Hedonistic chief good that she has a difficulty in thinking of any other. No objective end is open to this objection. Suppose a man regards the accumulation of wealth as his chief good; or suppose he takes the advancement of education as his end, or the founding of a family, or the progress of religion, or any similar object. No one of these would be open to this objection. The end suggested by Mr. H. Spencer or by Mr. Leslie Stephen is not open to it, nor is that suggested by Green. It is true that for these writers, as well as for the Hedon-

"Count o'er the joys thine hours have seen,
Count o'er thy days from anguish free;
And know, whatever thou hast been,
'Tis something better not to be,"

he is regarding life as a continuous whole, though he takes a quite fallacious way of estimating its value as such (since the "days from anguish free" are not necessarily the most interesting and valuable days in retrospect).

* Miss Jones says that I admit the possibility of addition when I speak of "a sum of pleasures." Of course, I admit the possibility as an abstract idea, just as I admit the possibility of an idea of $\sqrt{-1}$. But this idea is serviceable as a mathematical convention. I am not sure that the other is.

† "Social Philosophy," p. 209, etc.; "Manual of Ethics," p. 105.

‡ Page 91.

ists, the good goes on realizing itself throughout successive moments; but the end is conceived by them either as a distant object to which we are gradually approximating, or else as consisting simply in the continuous process of development itself. No one of them thinks of the good, as the Hedonists do, as consisting in two incompatible things: on the one hand, a subjective state of feeling (pleasure); on the other hand, the abstract idea of an impossible sum.* Of course, if one were to say frankly from the first that the chief good is algebraic, that we can aim at nothing higher than the greatest possible development of a series, this might be a self-consistent view. It would be an end like that of the cricketer, who seeks to make as many large scores as possible. But, after all, the cricketer values his scores, not because they make up a big sum, but because they are a sign of good play. Has the big imaginary sum of the Hedonist any similar significance? If so, then I should say that that which gives it significance, and not the imaginary sum itself, is his real chief good. And I have no doubt that this is what most Utilitarians really mean. When they fancy they are valuing an algebraic series, it is only because this series may be taken as the sign of a happy state of life. I cannot doubt, for instance, that this was what J. S. Mill meant. "The ingredients of happiness," he says,† "are very various, and each of them is desirable in itself, and not merely when considered as swelling an

* The true rational Hedonism, as I conceive, would be one which should regard the supreme good as consisting in a single flash of pleasant feeling. This is the view that seems to be suggested by Mr. Stout. (See, for instance, *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ETHICS*, vol. iv., No. 1, pp. 117, 118.) Only so can my chief good be *mine*; as the Hedonist, above all men, should surely insist that it is. A sum of pleasures is a good for nobody. It exists at the best only as an imaginary quantity in the Hedonist's ledger. Mr. Stout's good would at least be real for him. And if Mr. Stout admits (as I believe he does) that this flash of pleasant feeling is inconceivable apart from an objective content, of which it is merely the hedonic aspect, the difference between us is certainly infinitesimal. The fundamental error of Hedonism, as I believe, consists in abstracting this aspect from the concrete content to which it belongs, and then treating this miserable abstraction as if it were a concrete object, capable of being summed up along with other objects like it. If pleasure is to be taken as the good at all, it should be regarded not as a collection of old pennies, but as an indivisible jewel. But, even so, I am convinced that it is a jewel that has value only in so far as it sparkles in the light of the objective good. It has value not in itself, but only as an appreciation of the true good.

† "Utilitarianism," chap. iv.

aggregate. The principle of utility does not mean that any given pleasure, as music, for instance, or any given exemption from pain, as, for example, health, are to be looked upon as means to a collective something termed happiness, and to be desired on that account. They are desired and desirable in and for themselves; besides being means, they are a part of the end." Precisely; but this is not Hedonism. If music and health are parts of the end, the end is happiness in the concrete, not pleasure in the abstract. As a sort of symbolic representation of this concrete happiness, there may be a certain significance in the effort to sum up pleasures; just as there might be some significance in trying to estimate the number of points of beauty in a picture gallery, though what any one really cares for is not the abstract beauty, nor the number of points in which it is displayed, but the concrete beautiful pictures. Surely all good things are objective and concrete.

Finally, Miss Jones objects* to my saying that "the pleasure of others cannot be the good for us if the good is pleasure." This saying is founded on the idea that for a self-conscious being the good must be a good *for self*. Now this good may be conceived either as objective or as subjective. I may say that my good consists in the objects that I value, and ultimately in the most perfect realization of the whole universe of objects. Or I may "sit down in a cool hour," and say to myself that all the objects that I value are in reality valueless; that the only thing that has value is the mere sense of value itself, the mere subjective feeling of satisfaction. If the latter is the true view, then what has value for me is *my* feeling of satisfaction. Another person's feeling of satisfaction is objective to me, and must lose its value along with other objects. This truth is partly recognized by some Hedonists. It is, as I understand, the source of that Dualism of Practical Reason, of which Dr. Sidgwick makes so much.

I think I have now replied to all the points that have been raised by Miss Jones, so far as I am personally concerned in them. Though in the main I am in substantial agreement with the doctrines of Green, Bradley, and others, to whom she refers, yet I cannot, of course, hold myself responsible for their particular statements. And perhaps Professor Gizycki may be trusted to serve as his own interpreter. I am much indebted to Miss Jones

* Pages 94, 95.

for the careful and thorough way in which she has dealt with my objections, and for the opportunity with which she has provided me of giving some further explanation of points on which perhaps I had not previously made my meaning sufficiently clear. I hope I may have now succeeded in making it a little more apparent. Yet my gratitude is, I must confess, dashed with some regret that it should be necessary again to make what, I fear, must look like an attack on Utilitarianism. It has been said that the worst use you can put a philosopher to is to refute him; and I feel that this is as true of Utilitarian philosophers as of any others. The value of Locke's contribution to psychology is not annulled—perhaps even scarcely impaired—by the fact that he tripped a little over the word “idea.” Neither is the constructive work of the Utilitarians in Politics, Morals, and Economics made of no account because they tripped a little over the word “pleasure.” Assuredly, the best of them did not really mean to maintain that the chief good of life is a mathematical conundrum; and in their best work one may well forget that they ever seemed to imply that it is. At a time when so many are denying that ethical principles have any practical value at all, their magnificent insistence on social and political reforms can scarcely be too highly esteemed. They meant a concrete good, however they may have seemed to insist on an abstract one. However they may have appeared to reduce all values to the contemptible one of subjective satisfaction, and however they may have appeared to weigh satisfactions like grocers' merchandise, yet the concrete happiness of mankind always remained deepest in their thoughts; and in insisting that this happiness has a subjective * as well as an objective side they were no doubt rendering useful service. In view of all their work, “if I may take without prejudice the Hedonist's conclusion to be general pleasure, why should I seek to deny,” any more than Mr. Bradley,† “that such a statement may after all convey, erroneously and one-sidedly, the truth”? Pleasure is certainly an aspect of the good; but I cannot admit that the whole good for man is pleasure in the abstract (separated from its objective accompaniments); I cannot admit that it is to be distributed

* I have endeavored always to bear this in mind, though Miss Jones seems to suppose that I deny it. Cf. *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ETHICS*, vol. iv., No. 3, p. 381.

† *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ETHICS*, vol. iv., No. 3, p. 386.

like grocers' merchandise; I cannot admit that it is a kind of mathematical conundrum.*

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“RATIONAL HEDONISM”—A REJOINDER.

MR. MACKENZIE complains of the ambiguity of the definition of pleasure upon which I rely, and says that if I take *feeling* in Dr. Ward's sense, the definition in question involves *petitio principii*, because “it is a disputed point whether feeling in that sense is ever judged to be desirable at all.” *Feeling*, in Dr. Ward's sense, is simply pleasure and pain; and I accept the word in that sense, only explaining that it is concrete pleasantness of conscious states which I regard as the ethical end, and not any “abstract” and isolated constituent of consciousness which, though *distinguishable* (and necessarily distinguished in thought and language) from the other constituents, is not *separable* from them. (Similarly *beauty* is an artistic end, though not realizable apart from paint and canvas, etc.)†

It seems to me that certain ethical writers do most undoubtedly lay down that pleasant feeling in this sense is desirable, and pain undesirable. Indeed, is not the fundamental complaint of “Idealist” against Hedonist moralists this, that the Hedonists *do* judge pleasant feeling and absence of painful feeling to be the ultimately desirable end of action? Is it not, for instance, beyond dispute that Bentham and Herbert Spencer believe this? And the same is true of Clarke and Butler, who are generally classed as Intuitionists. Could anything be more unequivocal than Butler's assertion

* On the difficulty involved in reducing intensive magnitude to extensive (with special reference to psychical intensities) I may refer to Münsterberg's “Beiträge zur Experimentellen Psychologie,” Heft 3, pp. 4-5.

† When it is said: feeling is pleasure and pain, pleasure means desirable feeling, the good or end means what is ultimately desirable, and the good or end is pleasure—a *Circulus* is avoided; and what the final statement amounts to is *not* a definition, but the synthetic proposition that what is *ultimately and intrinsically* desirable is desirable *feeling*. Pleasure is defined (or described) by Mr. Mackenzie as “a sort of unreasoned choice.” This appears to me to bring pleasure under the heads of Intellect and Will; and to be highly disputable, and it is not the same thing as saying (as he does elsewhere) that pleasure is a sense (or immediate apprehension) of value.